

The first explicit statement of Boosevelt's attitude to-
wards woman suffrage which appears in his
correspondence
was in a letter addressed on November 10,
1908, to Mrs.
Harriet Taylor Upton, of Warren, Ohio,
Treasurer of the
National American Woman Suffrage
Association:

"I will give you exactly my feeling about
your request
that I speak a word for woman suffrage in my
annual
message. I do not think it would be wise to do
so; not in
the least because of any consideration about
myself, but
because I think that it is not in any shape or
way a live
issue at this time, and because I do not see
what good would
come of my mentioning it.

"Personally I believe in woman suffrage, but
I am not an
enthusiastic advocate of it because I do not
regard it as a
very important matter. I am unable to see
that there has
been any special improvement in the position
of women
in those States in the West that have adopted
woman suf-
frage, as compared with those States
adjoining them that
have not adopted it. I do not think that giving
the women
suffrage will produce any marked improvement
in the con-
dition of women. I do not believe that it will
produce any
of the evils feared, and I am very certain that
when women
as a whole take any special interest in the
matter they
will have the suffrage if they desire it But at
present I
think most of them are lukewarm; I find some
actively for
it and some actively against it.

"I am, for the reasons above given, rather
what you
would regard as lukewarm or tepid in my

support of it
because, while I believe in it, I do not regard it
as of very
much importance. I believe that man and
woman should
stand on an equality of right, but I do not
believe that
equality of right means identity of function;
and I ain more
and more convinced that the great field, the
indispensable
field, for the usefulness of woman is as the
mother of the
family. It is her work in the household, in the
home, her
work in bearing and rearing the children,
which is more
important than any man's work, and it is that
work which
should be normally the woman's special
work, just as